

Spring getaways

ROMANCE, BEAUTY AND ADVENTURE - DISCOVER ALL THIS AND MORE WITH OUR PICK OF THE BEST UK DESTINATIONS AND STUNNING RURAL ESCAPES

CLOCKWISE, FROM THIS PICTURE Watch the sunset at Smugglers Cove; wander among the heather; camp in style



WALES *an adventurous spirit*

Wild, mountainous Snowdonia in north-west Wales is a magnet for extreme sports fans and outdoorsy types, offering majestic terrain that can be enjoyed from land, air and sea. A new tourism campaign, Snowdonia 360, seeks to highlight all the region has to offer, be it a gentle hike or a sky-high adventure.

WHAT TO DO

Head to Adventure Parc Snowdonia in the Conwy Valley to ride artificial waves at an inland surf lagoon. Explore Llechwed's slate caverns, learn to wakeboard at Glasfryn Parc on the Llyn Peninsula, and zoom

along the world's fastest zip line at Zip World Penrhyn Quarry. Plus, there are miles of hiking routes.

WHERE TO EAT

For a post-ramble pub lunch, head to The Bull in Anglesey, a historic inn serving award-winning food.

THE PLACE TO STAY

To get back to nature without the stress of putting up a tent, Graig Wen's shepherd's hut is the answer (graiqwen.co.uk). Smugglers Cove Boatyard in Gwynedd is home to cosy cottages, or there's The Boy John, a beached boat you can rent by the night (smugglerscove.info).



THIS PAGE, FROM TOP Stroll around the grounds of Walmer Castle in Deal; pretend life's a fairytale with an overnight stay at The Prospect Tower

KENT *glorious gardens*

Known as 'The Garden of England', Kent is home to some of the country's most beautiful green spaces. From castle grounds and country estates to botanical centres, Kent is a horticulturalists's dream.

WHAT TO DO

Get outdoors and start exploring. Our favourite spots include Sissinghurst Castle Gardens, the former home of Vita Sackville-West, and Hever Castle's 125 acres of manicured grounds. Walmer Castle's intimate estate offers pretty-as-a-picture views, and the grounds of Chartwell, Winston Churchill's former home, delight with lakes and Lady Churchill's rose garden.

WHERE TO EAT

The Goods Shed in Canterbury contains a farmer's market stuffed

with local produce and a food hall that is making good use of it. The Milk House in Sissinghurst, close to the castle gardens, offers top-notch pub food, while the Fordwich Arms provides Michelin-starred cooking - perfect for special occasions.

THE PLACE TO STAY

Book into The Prospect Tower, an early 19th-century folly built for Lord Harris of Seringapatam, and gaze out over the rolling green gardens (landmarktrust.org.uk). Complete with its own beautiful grounds, Leeds Castle also offers beautiful accommodation options in both the Stable Courtyard and Maiden's Tower, while over in Canterbury, a new Pig hotel tempts guests with its tried-and-tested rustic-luxe lodgings.



CLOCKWISE, FROM THIS PICTURE Lynn Chadwick's *Diamond*; Jesse Wine's *Let Me Entertain*; tuck in at Goodwood



SUSSEX art & culture

Each year, the Festival of Chichester brings a buzz to the city with its brimming showcase of music, theatre and poetry performances, as well as films, talks and tours.

WHAT TO DO

Head to Pallant House Gallery, an imposing Queen Anne townhouse turned modern British art gallery with an impressive modernist wing. You'll find works in the permanent collection by luminaries, such as Barbara Hepworth and Patrick Caulfield. Nearby in the Goodwood Estate is the Cass Sculpture Foundation - a remarkable outdoor art park. Before you leave, grab a show at Chichester Festival Theatre.

MUST BOOK

From the 13 June to 12 July, the Festival of Chichester will host its annual cultural extravaganza. Previous years have seen the likes of Victoria Hislop and Kate Mosse wow audiences. (festivalofchichester.co.uk).

THE PLACE TO STAY

A little way out of town at the famed racing estate, the boutique Goodwood Hotel offers stylish accommodation in a bucolic setting. Try dinner in Farmer, Butcher, Chef, the hotel's bistro-style dining room.



THIS PICTURE Hide away from it all at Supernova; BELOW enjoy a cup of tea with a view in your room

DEVON gourmet escape

The county of cream teas and country fairs, Devon is a favourite when it comes to gourmet British grub. Rolling countryside and fresh coastal air makes for optimal agricultural conditions, and the bountiful produce tastes best when it's fresh and local.

WHAT TO DO

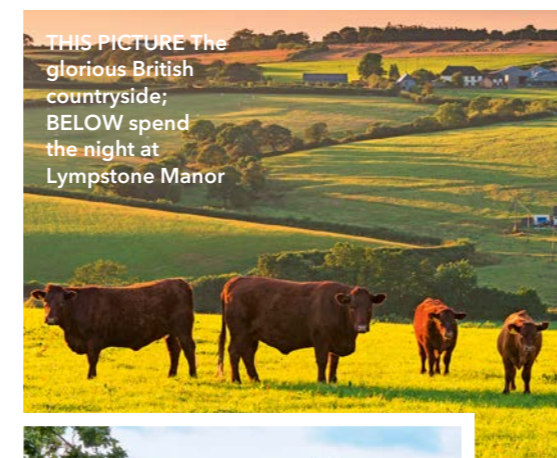
If you're making a weekend of it, head to Exeter's town centre for the weekly street food market. Spanish, Persian, Vietnamese, Egyptian and American - you'll find it all in easy to carry-and-scoff form. While over in Plymouth, the Gin Distillery offers tours that let you blend your own recipe - you can even take a bottle or two of it home with you.

WHERE TO EAT

Riverford Field Kitchen made its name with veg boxes - a taste of Devon delivered to your door. Its restaurant in Buckfastleigh offers kitchen garden to table cooking in a purpose-built barn, full of rustic character. If it's seafood you're after, head to The Beachhouse in South Milton. Set right on the sand, there's nowhere better to munch on fresh squid and traditional battered cod.

THE PLACE TO STAY

It has to be Lymestone Manor, Michael Caines' vanilla-coloured mansion sitting pretty above the Exe Estuary. A gorgeous, luxury hotel with sweeping coastal views and a Michelin-starred restaurant.



THIS PICTURE The glorious British countryside; BELOW spend the night at Lymestone Manor

SKYE remote & romantic

Otherworldly landscapes, quaint fishing villages and rugged shoreline mark out the Isle of Skye as one of Britain's most beautiful places. Truly remote and reached by bridge from Scotland's north-west coast, Skye is the perfect destination to escape the stresses of modern life, embrace the wild setting and luxuriate in idyllic peace and quiet. Walk the beaches, explore hidden, ancient castles, and breathe the purest of salt-tinged air.

WHAT TO DO

You could try your hand at rock climbing and mountaineering on the Cuillin Hills, check out the dramatic scenery at the Old Man of Storr, swim in the Fairy Pools of Glen Brittle or take a boat trip to see the white-tailed sea eagles. Alternatively, get cosy and enjoy doing nothing.

WHERE TO EAT

A favourite on the island is The Three Chimneys, a seafood



restaurant making the most of its location - the accolades have been piling up for years in celebration of head chef Scott Davies' inventive cooking. Kinloch Lodge, a hotel on the shores of Loch na Dal, is noted for its fine dining and foraged ingredients, while The Old School offers a more casual menu in an 1870s schoolhouse.

THE PLACE TO STAY

For a far-flung romantic escape, book yourself into Supernova. A

chapel conversion on a highland hillside with views across Loch Harport, this cosy rustic-chic hideaway - part of the Unique Home Stays group - promises total seclusion from the bothers of the outside world. Over in the village of Geary, Mint Croft provides similarly isolated lodgings: two crofters' cottages looking over the sea, outfitted with deVol kitchens, wood-burning stoves and local artisan welcome hampers.